Direction of History Education for East-Asian Co-Prosperity: Paradigm Shift from Teaching History to Teaching Historiography

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Conflict in the Recognition of History between Japan and other East Asian Countries

The birth of every modern nation necessitates the creation of a story about its people and its traditions; this story forms part of the national history of that country and fosters a national consciousness. Two World Wars took place in the first half of the twentieth century, and it was known to have been brought about by a combination of extreme nationalism and imperialism, along with national consciousness. Japan, at the time, was brimming with such feelings of nationalism; they not only colonized Taiwan and Korea using military force but also planned to expand their rule in China, Southeast Asia and the Pacific. This resulted in the Sino-Japanese and Pacific Wars as well as in enormous damage to various nations and ethnic groups. Therefore, Japanese history education after World War II began with the regret for modern Japan's militarism and nationalism. This is one generalized reason why in history education in Japan, historical events and figures are taught matter-of-factly, without emphasis on national consciousness. Korea, China, and other Asian nations, however, aimed to build new nation-states after World War II. Therefore, when writing the stories of the formation of their nations, "anti-Japanese" sentiments and the need for "liberation" became fair subject material. It can be said that the time lag in modernization efforts between Japan and other Asian countries, as well as the rising of a national consciousness, was a reason for the later conflict about historical recognition.

The Cold War was another source of the conflict. If the Cold War had not taken place, there would have been discussions for atonement and reconciliations among the countries involved in World War II. Regardless, the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union took place an

actual war in Asia. Cases in point are the Korean War and the Vietnam War. In addition, the People's Republic of China, which was led by the Communist Party, was faced with long-term disorder stemming from struggles over leadership, ultimately culminating in the Cultural Revolution. Therefore, even after World War II, Korea, China, and other Asian countries had to confront war and revolutions that were caused by the Cold War. Only Japan, under the sanctuary of the United States military, was able to quickly achieve high economic growth owing to the special procurement boom of the Korean and Vietnam Wars. In other words, there was another type of time lag—that of national reconstruction—between Japan and other Asian countries.

The Cold War ended in the early 1990s, and the world became an era of globalization. Half a century had passed since World War II,and as the number of war veterans grew smaller, there was an increase in the number of Japanese people who felt indifferent to colonial rule and aggressive war that Japan performed in the past. By contrast, in Korea—a country that had also succeeded in economic growth known as the "Miracle on the Han River" and democratization—there arose a movement that had long been set aside, to condemn Japan's colonial rule. The issues of Japanese history textbooks description and Comfort Women were symbols of this movement. Although China had also achieved rapid economic growth due to its political reforms and Open Door Policy, following the end of the Cultural Revolution, amidst the great regional, economic disparities within the country and the political one-party rule of the Communist Party, China still faced the need to emphasize the unity of its people and the legitimacy of the Communist Party. The symbol of this need was the condemnation, through patriotic education, of the Japanese invasion and their aggressive acts such as Nanjing Massacre. These manifested in claims over territorial interests in the Senkaku Islands and Spratly Islands.

Perhaps many Korean and Chinese people wonder whether Japan truly regrets its colonial rule and invasion and why Japan does not directly apologize and pay reparations for the past. However, many Japanese people question how long the past needs to be dragged on in order for Korea and China to be satisfied, since Japan has already offered official apologies again and again. Undoubtedly, there is a gap in history recognition and thoughts (sentiments) between the Japanese and the Koreans, and the Japanese and the Chinese. In other words, the root of the conflict lies not in the facts and their interpretations but in the national sentiments that formed the backgrounds of these two time lags during the formation of the modern nation-states. Therefore, even today, when historians gather to discuss this issue, it is not an easy problem to resolve.

Method for Improving History Education: Relativization of History Education as National Formation

What is the best approach to improve history education in light of a people's national sentiments? Generally speaking, we need a form of history education that looks squarely at the past for what it is, without turning a blind eye, and a history education that looks at past interactions rather than past conflicts. Therefore, we must relativize history education as a national formation that is inclined toward nationalism. I will present two specific measures for the relativization of history education: to write world history education content from a more global perspective and to rewrite our nation's individual history education from a more local perspective.

We can rephrase the former measure as a transformation from world history to global history. Although the scope of world history content in conventional Japanese education is global in the areas it addresses—Eurasia, Africa, and Americas—it is essentially an aggregation of the histories of some Western nations like the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia, and of the Asian historical empires of China, India, Iran, and Turkey. In other words, although it is referred to as world history, it captures only the histories of the major sovereign states. In contrast, global history, as its name suggests, approaches the history of mankind from a global perspective. Global history can be broadly classified into three types: (1) history that is focused on the rise and fall of major civilizations, as put forth by historians Arnold J. Toynbee and William. H. MacNeil; (2) history that focuses on interactions and relationships beyond the framework of nations and civilizations, as put forth by historians Fernand Braudel, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Abu-Lughod; and (3) big history, which describes the history of Global Community from a cosmic perspective, as put forth by historians Leften S. Stavrianos and David Christian. While each of these three types has its significance and challenges, about (1) mentioned above, there is the risk of inheriting the Western-centered view of history and the risk of falling into the clash of civilizations theory (Samuel Huntington). Big history, (3) mentioned above, can also be called cosmic history in grandeur; it tends to be slightly ideological and speculative, and is considered to be inappropriate for history learning based on interpretation of primary and secondary sources. Therefore, in my opinion, the transnational and transcultural history, (2) mentioned above, is best.

Next, we can rephrase the latter measure—rewriting our nation's individual history education from more local perspectives—as the pluralistic composition of our nation's history. For example, in the traditional, general image of Japanese history, the ancient times were seen as the era of the emperor

and the nobility who supported him; the middle ages was the era of samurai families, court aristocracy (emperor and nobility), and temple families; the early modern period was the era of the samurai; and modern Japan is the era of citizens (national citizens). Although the location of Imperial Court and the Shogunate changed by the times, e.g. Nara, Kyoto, Kamakura, Muromachi, and Edo etc., Japanese history is caught as a coherent, single history by people. However, in the premodern Japanese archipelago, the Ryukyuan and the Ainu people had their own nations and communities that were not ruled by the Japanese imperial court and shogunate; even within the so-called Japanese (Yamato) nation, Kinai and Saigoku (western provinces) were ruled by the imperial court (emperor), and Togoku (eastern province) was ruled by the shogunate (samurai) and governed according to different principles. To group these regions together as one Japan is impossible. Therefore, what is necessary is a pluralization of content that (1) focuses on the pluralism contained in the Japanese archipelago, and (2) portrays not just one, but many images of Japanese history. I would also like to examine, from a more local perspective, the local histories of the provinces, which shape the views of students. Related documents on local history are probably preserved and exhibited in local museums and resource centers; further, if any relics and ruins remain, students will be able to observe and investigate these at their local museums. The relativization of history education cannot be confined to classrooms and textbooks; instead, it needs to be connected to student activities such as researching and visiting historical locations off campus, and reading and discussing historical documents. I guess that in ancient times in Korea, there were three kingdoms—Koguryo, Silla, and Baekje—which have left the country with a unique history and culture that still prevails locally, perhaps more so than in Japan. A local perspective is extremely important in order to retain these multiple Korean histories rather than combine them as a single Korean history.

Method for Improving History Education: Introduction of Historiography

History is a subject that explores and describes events that took place in the past. It has two functions: precisely clarifying the causes, background, developments, and societal impacts of past events, and documenting these events in some form. Generally, the aim of history research is to investigate facts through the excavation and criticism of primary sources. The outcomes of this research are then written down in the form of monographs. Academic societies constantly debate the validity of this research. On the other hand, historiography explores the methodology of historical research and refers to the study of describing and writing history. Although there are many history

researchers in Japan, there are extremely few researchers of historiography and historical philosophy. Perhaps for this reason, when we say "history" education, in the Japanese context, we tend to mean academic history or past events and disregard historiography or meta-history.

As previously stated, it is essentially that the history subject in modern schools is taught as the story of a nation that combines positive, convenient facts for the purpose of national formation. This is precisely why the same conflicts regarding history recognition between, for example, Japan and Korea, and Japan and China, keep recurring. Without directly owning up to these facts, however, history teachers act as if history education merely deals with objective facts from the past. Therefore, the basic questions to be explored are "What were the past facts?" "Why did those events take place?" "What impact did those events have on later history?" These questions are similar to those studied in history research, but the targets of these questions are the events and people described in the textbooks from the perspective of national formation. There remains a tendency to look to the textbooks for the correct answers instead of basing the answers on historical criticism, as do historians. This method of history education, aimed at high school and college entrance examinations, wherein all the textbook content is taught within a limited amount of time, became widespread, and its absolute priority was pragmatism.

To transition from this type of teaching methodology to a more improved one, it is necessary to focus on historiography (which has thus far been neglected) and continue to carry out a history education that is aware of the interpretation and construction of history. We can call this the transformation from history education to metahistory education. For example, (1) upon considering the evaluation of people and events in history, one may ask, "Why are these people and events so highly evaluated? Or, are they being wrongly undervalued? What is the basis for this? (2) Upon considering history terminology, one may ask, "From what standpoint was this historical term created? What sort of values and biases are included in this historical term?" (3) When considering certain historical descriptions, one may ask, "Who wrote this, whom was it intended for, and for what purpose?" Underlying all these questions is one very basic question that seeks to elicit the meaning and essence of history, "What is history?" We can call this the question of metahistory.

I will now use several examples. As the first example, Shotoku Taishi (Prince Shotoku) was one of the most famous figures in ancient Japanese history. He was an active politician from the end of the sixth century to the early seventh century; he worked toward establishing a centralized state system centered on the emperor, and preserving Buddhism as the philosophy

for national governance. About one hundred years after his death, he came to be considered as a reincarnation of a bodhisattva, thereby becoming an object of faith. Thereafter, Shotoku Taishi was worshipped by people throughout Japan. In modern times, in addition to having his portrait on large bills from 1930 to 1980, he was widely known among the Japanese people for the *taishicho*—the town which named Taishi (Prince)—summits in the Nara, Osaka, and Hyogo Prefectures. However, he remains a mysterious figure in history, and some historians question his very existence. Although Shotoku Taishi and his deeds are described in elementary and middle school history textbooks as though he were a real person, in high school textbooks, the content of which reflects trends in academia, his name has been changed from Shotoku Taishi to Umayato-Ou—Umayato is his real name and Ou means the king—, and his works are described with restraint, with a disclaimer stating that the information cannot be completely verified. If the goal of history education is the teaching of objective facts from history, then this becomes an extremely difficult case. However, if we understand history as the learning of metahistory, then conversely, this case becomes ideal teaching material. Some of the questions that need to be explored include, "Around when, and under what circumstances did people start to worship Shotoku Taishi? Why did this man grasp the hearts of so many people?" "What do Japanese people today think of Shotoku Taishi?" "What was the purpose of the *taishicho* summits?" "Why do textbooks since the Mejia Era continue to include this person when we are not even sure he is real?" "What role did Shotoku Taishi play in the formation of the national consciousness of the Japanese people?" "What essence of history do we learn from Shotoku Taishi?"

The second example pertains to how we review incidents (wars, revolutions, and rebellions), names of people and places, and how years are numbered. With regard to naming wars, the Persian War and Punic Wars were named from the viewpoints of the Greeks and Romans; the terms "Crusades" and "Reconquista" are used when viewing the Islamic world from the Christian worldview. A similar intention can be seen behind the overestimation of the Battle of Tours-Poitiers (732 CE), despite the lack of reliable historical records. In terms of revolutions and reforms, for example, the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation were terms used to refer to the Protestant and Catholic reformations, respectively. The seventeenth-century civil war in England was referred to as the "Puritan Revolution" in historical studies in Japan; the use of this terminology gives us a view of the state of Japanese society at the time and of the Japanese historical societies, which iconized and viewed the people's revolution as nothing more than an idealized form.

Further, "rebellions" became "revolutions" if the uprisings were successful; if they failed, they remained "rebellions." In terms of more recent developments, we have the Indian Rebellion, which started the Sipahi Revolt, and the Taiping Revolt, which marked the Taiping Revolution. It is also important to consider how events were named and how designations were changed. With regard to year numbering, the modern Western calendar is widely used, but we must first recognize the meaning of the Western calendar while comparing it with Islamic calendar and Japanese era names. As the Western calendar came to be used more extensively in Western countries, the representation of years was changed to the Christian BC and AD; currently, there is a growing trend toward a common calendar using BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era). The above examples show how even year numbering can draw attention to certain ideologies.

By way of the final example, I mention the importance of reviewing the subject of an action and the result in historical descriptions and assume a critical viewpoint of the evaluative descriptions contained in textbooks. Take, for example, the Persian War in ancient Greece (the problem with the term "Persian War" has been stated above). Here is a description of the war from a textbook: "To those East of the tyranny, this victory has deep significance as something that protected the freedom and independence of the Greek people." Students who do not doubt the textbook may see this as the only legitimate view. However, this description hides whom this is significant for and who confirms this significance. Similarly, there is a description of the Byzantine Empire in the Middle Ages: "The cultural achievements of this empire civilized the Slavic people and preserved ancient cultural heritages, and influenced the Renaissance"; yet, why must the cultural significance of the Byzantine Empire be evaluated on the basis of its contributions to the European world? To foster questions like these among students, it is important to focus attention on the ends of sentences in descriptions and promote critical thinking aimed at evaluative discourse.

Let us use another example: in the sentence "With the July 1937 Marco Polo Bridge incident, all-out war between Japan and China began," the subject of the sentence is all-out war, and intentionally or not, the responsibility for this war is hidden. A different textbook contains the following description: "After the July 1937 Marco Polo Bridge incident, Japan charged/entered into the Sino-Japanese War." Although the subject of the action is clearly Japan, with the predicate "charged/entered into the Sino-Japanese War," the result of the action (that Japan caused the war and invaded China) is obscured. In both cases, the descriptions may be the result of specific expressions in Japanese;

however, to recognize the construction of history as a story, we must focus on the subjects and predicates of the story and read deeper into its meaning.

Conclusion—Relationship between Teaching History and Teaching Historiography

In order to consider the position and role of historiography in history education, I will reconfirm the difference between the two concepts.

Aim	Knowledge	Education
Exploration of historical facts	History	Teaching history
Exploration of the nature of history	Meta-history	Teaching historiography

Fig. 1: Differences between history and historiography

In today's age of globalization, I have asserted that historiography (knowledge of meta-history) should be introduced alongside the relativization of twentieth-century history education, which is overly inclined toward national formation. However, the inclusion of historiography does not completely negate conventional history education. Students in the primary levels, in particular, require a history education that focuses on a history of their own country, which will undoubtedly include the stories of ethnic groups and other nations; this will enable them to gain an understanding of the major events in the history of humankind. For students in secondary school levels, it is necessary to have a history education that centers on facts while simultaneously allowing for a critical understanding of multiple historical documents from differing viewpoints that look at the effect of past events on the modern world, regardless of whether it is their own national history or world history. An example of this is Stanford University's Sam Weinberg's approach of "Reading like a historian." According to this approach, in order to learn the truth behind mythologized American history, events, and persons, teaching materials, lesson plans, and evaluation methods need to be developed and published for history education that focuses on the reading and discussion of historical documents.

However, if we consider the aim of history education to be the cultivation of wise, tolerant citizens, rather than the cultivation of historians, then exploring not only past facts but also today's controversies over the history recognition is important. In this case, the issue becomes about positioning historiography within the broader history curriculum. Generally, the biggest challenge faced by history teachers is finding a balance between the breadth and

depth of the content they teach; however, I opine that for students in secondary school, it is necessary to emphasize a learning that delves deeply, and as a part of this deep learning, we should position historiography as a question that asks "What is history?" In the twenty-first century, historians, educators, and citizens should resolve through discussion and debate the questions of what content should remain as essential history education, what should be removed, and what should be adopted as new content? Therefore, above all else, we should not have national governance over educational methods and content; instead, individual teachers and students should be able to freely explore local history and global questions, and establish systems and environments wherein people can debate historical recognition.

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